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Transcript: Dr Chris Moy, Sky News Live Thursday, 22 April 2021

Subject: COVID-19 Vaccination reset

PETER STEFANOVIC: Well joining me live now is Dr Chris Moy, the Vice President of the Australian Medical Association. Doctor, good to see you as always. The AMA is calling for four specific changes, the way things are going on at the moment. Can you elaborate those for our viewers?

CHRIS MOY: Look, essentially, it's pretty common sense. What we need is a clear plan as far as supply and [audio error] general practice are the foundation and we need these mass vaccination clinics and the other things, like hospitals, building on it. We need clear communication of the plan and that is to who does what and particularly also to patients about- information about vaccines and about where and when they will be able to get it. And I think probably the other key thing we need is some real leadership by the states and federal. We need the band to get back together again with National Cabinet, some leadership, stop the politicisation and understand this is too big to politicise. Just get on with the job.

PETER STEFANOVIC: The Government is speeding up the vaccination program for those aged over 50, but the biggest issue with that being that confidence is shot. So, how do you fix that?

CHRIS MOY: Well, I think that last point that I indicated is the key there. We need some leadership to give them. So I think if you look at the landscape, there were some inadvisable sort of promises made about when we're going to get it even before we'd actually had the vaccinations approved. Look, I think it's become a political target – a bit of snarking between the states and federal. From a medical point of view as a doctor, we don't care about that. We need this vaccination program to happen, and we need everybody working together as we did earlier in the pandemic. And the state and federal government need to work together and set out that plan about the supply: Who does what, and the communication in the next few weeks.

PETER STEFANOVIC: What about vaccination hubs? What do you make of that? Or do you prefer that the GPs - that it's still run mostly by GPs at clinics?

CHRIS MOY: At the moment, if you look at the numbers, the GPs are really doing their bit. They're escalating their numbers. Their problem until now has been supply and also that not all of them been on deck. Virtually now, all of them are on deck and the numbers are quite impressive. What we need to do now is build on that because we need to increase the numbers, because sometimes mass vaccination clinics are, first up, going to be more convenient for some people. They're also going to be good for excess AstraZeneca, when we get it, and I think that may be very key in the rollout of the Pfizer vaccine because of the increased storage and technical requirements for that. So, they're going to be coming online, but I think it's all hands on deck and I think it's not so much a matter of replacement of general practice but building upon what we already have, because general practice is very used to giving out lots of vaccinations every year with the flu, and they're doing their bit at the moment.

PETER STEFANOVIC: What about the mRNA situation? It has come along too. Perhaps this \$50 million that's been shipped in by the Victorian Government. The PM seemed to suggest yesterday it's not really going to speed things up too much at this stage, but what do you make of that?

CHRIS MOY: Oh, it's a good step. I mean, that's a down payment for something. The mRNA technology is more like in the hundreds of millions and it's going to be a year or two away, I think, being realistic about it. And that's what I've heard. Now, the thing about it is, it's good that it's happening in Australia. It's probably another thing that we need to start looking at about sovereign capability. I mean, I think this goes into the whole issue that not only vaccine manufacturer - and good that we can make the AstraZeneca vaccine because that's going to put us ahead. I mean, if you look at

the numbers, we're ahead of New Zealand by double or two and a half times because of AstraZeneca. So for anybody who thinks that we're doing badly, we need to compare ourselves [indistinct]. But the mRNA is going to be important for the medium term, the longer term, and we need to look at the manufacturer of not just that, but medications into the future.

PETER STEFANOVIC: Given the delays that we've had so far, are you expecting that there will be [audio skip] when it comes to these extra shipments of the Pfizer vaccine?

CHRIS MOY: Look, it's hard to know. Hopefully, we can get to the table and get them out. But the reality is, for all the countries that have been doing pretty well, and even that some countries that are doing quite badly like Canada, it has been difficult to get these vaccines, because we don't make- the mRNA is essentially made in Europe or the US. Nothing is coming out of the US. Some is coming out of Europe, but only sort of at regular amounts. And we're not going to get most of our Pfizer until later in the year. So, I mean, that's one of the issues.

But look, let's look at it the other way. The good thing is we'll have AstraZeneca. So most of our over 50s, who are our biggest at-risk group, are going to be able to be vaccinated earlier. If we get them done, we'll be in a much safer position.

PETER STEFANOVIC: Chris Moy, good to chat. Talk to you soon.

CHRIS MOY: It's a pleasure.

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